

16. Spread the Holy Gossip

December 26, 2010

Let's say there are many people in a nice building that is about to go in flames any minute now. The problem is that no one knows that they are going to be trapped inside of a soon-to-be inferno. Then someone came to them and let them know that there is going to be a great big fire in this building and if they don't follow him out now, they will be burned to death.

A handful of people were smart enough to listen to him and began to follow him out of the building. On the way out, some of the people who were leaving started to tell others who were still in the building about the fire. The majority of them ignored their warning and chose to remain in the building.

At the same time the rest of the escapees chose not to tell others. They just wanted to get out.

By now you understand what I just described with this illustration. Of course, the building that is about to burn is the earth. And you all admit that some Christians are more than willing to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ than others. The problem is that that "others" is 95% of born-again Christians according to Evangelism Explosion International.

But for this Samaritan woman, it was much different. She came to the well at high noon to avoid the town gossip because of her loose living. Now once she got saved by the grace of Jesus, she couldn't wait to spread the Holy Gossip about Him to the rest of the town. Let's learn how to spread that Holy Gossip of Jesus to others from this new born Christian and our Lord Jesus Christ.

A. JESUS THE MESSIAH

John 4:25-26 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." 26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

Since Samaritans only considered the Pentateuch, the first five Books of the Old Testament as the Scripture, she had to learn about the Messiah from those five Books. In your bulletin, you will see brief references from the Pentateuch for Jesus as the Messiah. It is not an exhaustive list by any means.

In spite of her spiritual ignorance in many areas, she still had two truths down – the Messiah was coming and would reveal the secrets of hearts.

So then, what is the Messiah? In Hebrew language, it is pronounced "mashiah". It is a Hebrew version of Christ which is derived from a Greek word "Christos". They both mean "the Anointed One".

The first great promise in Gen 3:15 contains in it the beginning of all the prophecies recorded in the Old Testament regarding the coming of the Messiah and the great work He was to accomplish on earth.

Gen 3:15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.

I just love the way Jesus answered her. He declared that He was the Messiah. Did you notice a little type style change in your Bible at the end of this particular verse? If you have NKJV or NASB, you'd have noticed that 'He' is italicized. Whenever you see italicized words in Scripture, it means that the editor of the Bible publisher added it for readers to understand it easier.

So if you take off "He", the sentence would read "*I who speak to you am*". In other words, Jesus used the same name when the Lord God answered Moses from the burning bush.

Exodus 3:13-14 Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?" 14 And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

As far as I know, this is the first time Jesus proclaimed to be the Messiah to anyone since the beginning of His earthly ministry. Previously, when His disciples claimed that He was the Messiah, He didn't deny it. But this time He Himself claimed that He was the One.

B. COME AND SEE. COULD THIS BE THE CHRIST?

John 4:27-30 And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?" 28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, 29 "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" 30 Then they went out of the city and came to Him.

There is just no greater joy than when a conversation leads to a conversion in Christ. It is beyond phenomenal, it is a totally out-of-the-world exciting experience.

I believe that she was saved when Jesus declared that He was the Messiah. She couldn't wait to tell others about Him. Did she have enough knowledge of the Bible to tell others about the Four Spiritual Laws? No, but she met Jesus. Did this woman take a course of evangelism? No, but she met Jesus. She was not a Bible scholar, nor a skilled evangelist. But she was a five minute old brand new Christian who was excited about sharing the Good News of Jesus with others.

Some Christians who have been in the Lord for a long time might say, "Give them time, they will tone down." They say that as if the zeal and excitement to spread the Good News to others is some sort of craziness that all the Christians go through at the beginning and as we grow older in the Lord we are supposed to lose it. Absolutely not. I hope and pray that your zeal and excitement for the Lord and the willing heart to share with unbelievers never diminish as you become mature in Him.

As we grow older in the Lord, we should be mature in Him, not just older by time length, become tactful to approach and handle each evangelistic situation with the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

Let's notice and learn from our Savior and the example from the Samaritan woman, if you will.

1) He drew the Samaritan's woman's curiosity to His conversation.

John 4:7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."

Jesus started His conversation with her by requesting water. He didn't bring down the wrath of God for her immorality.

Let's say you're standing in a line at a supermarket and there's a few people in front of you. There's all the newspapers and gossip tabloids near the checkout stands. As usual there is so much bad news and somebody looks at the headlines and he or she just remarks out loud, "What is this world coming to?" This can be a perfect opportunity to witness. You can say, "You know, it seems as though this world is right on schedule." Then, they'll go, "Huh? What do you mean by that?" They will ask you with big eyes. Now you got their curiosity and attention.

2) Jesus patiently guided the conversation with her with the love for her eternal soul.

John 4:10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

Unbelievers are lost and they don't know about it, but they are not dumb. If you are only witnessing because you want to fulfill your monthly evangelistic quota so that you can brag how many people you've witnessed to your fellow believers, they'll know that you don't care about them except your own selfish goal.

3) Jesus didn't get pulled into religious never-ending arguments, but stayed in the course.

John 4:12-14 Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" 13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

Don't think that everyone whom you witness to would jump on the moment you talk about Jesus. Most likely they would come up with excuses why they don't need salvation with endless religious arguments, such as:

- What about the Pygmy tribes in Africa who have never heard the Gospel message? Do they go to hell?
- I go to church once in a while.
- I am a good person. God will not send me to hell, because I am not like you.
- There is more than one way to get to heaven. All gods are the same.

Don't get into that argument, you will be frustrated. Bring that person's eternal soul to the forefront of the topic, nothing else.

4) Give your testimony of what Jesus has done for you.

John 4:29 "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"

John 4:39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did."

One of the most effective tools you have in your evangelistic toolbox is telling your story, your personal testimony about how you came to believe in Jesus.

It is the power of a changed life. Use your story, because it is a way to preach to a person without preaching at a person. People don't like to be preached to. Your story is a bridge. You can say, "Let me tell you my story. I didn't always believe these

things. Here is what I used to be and how I used to live and what I used to think. But here is what I heard, and this is how Jesus changed my life." They can argue with a sermon, but they can't argue with your story. They can't argue with what God has done for you. So use that story to build the bridge. Let your testimony be less than seven minutes. If it is longer, you will start to lose their attention.

Remember, it is not about you; it is about Him. So when you tell your story, don't glorify or exaggerate your sinful and carnal past. Don't boast about what you gave up for God, but about what God gave up for you. We gave up guilt. We gave up judgment. We gave up hell. And in their place, God gave us purpose and meaning and heaven. And again remember, it is not about you. It is all about Jesus.

5) When the person is ready to receive Jesus into one's heart, go through the Scriptures to lead that person to Christ.

You can say that this is the closing of sale. Your words and my words don't mean a whole lot in the scheme of eternity. But Scripture is a different story. Please memorize these verses and make them to be a phrase within your dialogue and let them know that why they need to be saved:

Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Romans 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

6) If the person refuses, be courteous to leave him or her with kindness.

That person may not be ready to be saved at that time, but maybe later. Your job can be planting a seed of the Gospel of Jesus into one's heart. Someone might come by and water it. Then the Holy Spirit will bring it to harvest. We all work together as a team.

7) Pray for that person's soul while you are witnessing.

Zechariah 4:6b 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the Lord of hosts.

Remember that it is by the power of the Holy Spirit. Be sensitive to His leading. He will tell you in your heart whom you need to witness to and when and how.

I am going to leave with this true story:

Fritz Kreisler was a renowned violinist from Austria. Wherever he would go, he attracted large crowds to his concerts and he made huge sums of money playing the violin. Most of the money, however, he gave away.

When the time came for him to buy the most exquisite violin he had ever seen in his life, he had no money. So he raised the money quickly. He told the person selling the precious violin, "Hold it for me. I will raise the funds to buy this violin." And he did. But when he went back to the seller, the violin was already sold to a collector.

Fritz Kreisler went to the home of the collector and told him who he was and pleaded to him, "I'd like to buy your violin." The collector didn't need the money and he wanted the violin and he said, "I'm sorry. It's now my prized possession. I'm not going to sell it to you."

Kreisler was about to turn and leave, but he had a thought. He said to the collector, "Listen, before I resign that violin to eternal quietness, may I just play it once?" The collector didn't have any objection and he allowed Kreisler to play the violin.

And he played so beautifully, filled the room with such emotional music, that the collector said, "I have no right to keep it to myself. It's yours, Mr. Kreisler. You can have it. Take it into the world and let people hear it."

I believe Jesus would be saying to us today through this message, "Take my Gospel. It's yours. Take it into the world and let people hear it. Let people hear My message through you and tell them, "How much I love them!"

C. APPLICATIONS

Folks, witnessing is not that difficult if you put your mind into it. It is not like you are asked to speak in front of hundreds of people. It is a one on one conversation like you would do with one of your family members.

You may say, "What if they reject my witnessing? I would be so embarrassed." No, you are simply doing what the Lord tells you to do. Don't let your possible embarrassment stop you from what God wants you to do. If you do, you are listening to the devil, not the Lord.